

THE EXPERT AND THE PHILOSOPHER

Jorge Tárrago Mingo

“The technical path to be followed consists, in a first approximation, in bringing scientific practices and languages back toward their native land, everyday life. This return, which is today more and more insistent, has the paradoxical character of also being a going into exile with respect to the disciplines whose rigor is measured by the strict definition of its own limits”.

The expert and the philosopher (The practice of everyday life, chapter 1. A common place: Ordinary Language) University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984.

These apt lines are drawn from “The Expert and the Philosopher,” a subsection of “A Common Place: Ordinary Language,” the first chapter of *The Practice of Everyday Life* by French historian, philosopher, theologian and Jesuit priest Michel de Certeau. The text, which first appeared in essay form in 1980 and was very quickly translated into several languages, is entirely dedicated to the ordinary man, the anonymous social masses and those “commonly assumed to be passive and guided by established rules”.

It is based on Certeau’s earlier work on popular culture: over the course of two volumes and more than 500 pages, he develops a discourse that is too complex and structured to be addressed here and whose scope also goes beyond the points I would like to raise in these few lines.

I was intrigued by the dichotomy he establishes between these two figures, the expert and the philosopher. For Certeau, it is this dichotomy that “organizes modern society” into “scientific islands.” When brought into the realm of language, it makes a clear separation between artificial languages, which describe the procedures of a specific field of knowledge, and natural languages, which organize general significant activity. Although both figures are mediators between knowledge and society, the expert deals within a specialty, whereas the philosopher’s scope is more general.

The expert embodies the increased specialization that distances itself from common life and for which communication becomes more necessary, if not vital (another concept the expert believes). Philosophers, on the other hand, sometimes make use of technical language to gain the authority they need to introduce and provide arguments for the larger reflections that make up the natural scope of their work.

Again, my apologies for discussing the above quote so superficially outside its broader context. I was merely intrigued by Certeau’s ideas and thought they might add another nuance and provide a final response to the questions raised in my editorials in earlier issues of this journal, particularly “What is the Future of Academic Publishing?” (RA14, 2012), “Critical Architecture and Literary Genres: Theory’s Place in Architects’ Professional Discourse” (RA15, 2013) and “Architectural Texts” (RA16, 2014).

In each editorial, I have tried to pose a number of questions and draw attention to topics such as the limitations of language when describing architecture and architects’ fascination with philosophers. I have attempted to identify the distinguishing traits of different literary genres and find the ones most suitable for specific purposes. I have also assessed the strengths and weaknesses of academic publications such as this one.

Readers who go to the trouble of perusing these editorials in their order of publication will find they in no way reveal a defeatist attitude towards the situation of academic publishing, though there may certainly be plenty of reasons to have one. Rather, these editorials merely acknowledge the limitations of the task they undertake. While we cannot give up on the progress of knowledge in different disciplines in academic forums, we should also open our eyes and not fool ourselves: this content will rarely leave those same restricted circles in which it is produced, which is also one of the implicit deductions of the quote from Certeau. With this in mind, I would also paraphrase the Frenchman by saying that we either have to define the limits well or follow his advice. It will be very difficult to predict the results of this undertaking, the direction it will take and its real effect on the academic community and, in the best of cases, on actual practice.

In any event, the topic is open for discussion. And that is where I will leave it. Returning to the unwieldy paradox presented, I was not just wondering if academic writing on architecture should be theoretical, critical, functional or poetic, or whether our purposes would be better served by the essay or article form, but particularly whether we will actually be able to get back to living the everyday life.

In this issue

Step by step, Gerardo García-Ventosa i López describes the curious, checkered story of the little-known reconstruction of the Swedish Pavilion, originally built for the 1929 Barcelona International Exposition. The 1929 Barcelona International Exposition’s Swedish Pavilion: Eighty Years of History, 1928-2008 reproduces original, unpublished documents from the project by architect Peder Clason, who was born in Stockholm in 1894 and died in Rättvik in 1956. It also contains a wealth of technical data on the incredible story of how the building was taken down, rebuilt and adapted for different uses throughout its history. The article uses the author’s own first-person account to tell the facts and sequence of events as a participant in the story without resorting to any of the theoretical and interpretative speculation the article’s content will undoubtedly spark.

In Mies the Dandy, Mariano González Presencio focuses on Mies van der Rohe by expanding on Charles Baudelaire’s reflections on the dandy as described for the first time in the author’s celebrated *Painter of Modern Life* and, in particular, on the characteristics attributed to the dandy as a sign of modernity. This article fits within a relatively recent school of thought that is particularly interesting because it takes a look at the most intimate aspects of architects’ lives and everyday practices in the hopes of uncovering new perspectives and interpretations that will support their thought and work.

Andrés Tabera Roldán describes the personal voyage of young Antonio Bonet who, after working briefly at Le Corbusier’s atelier and participating in the construction of the Spanish Pavilion for the 1937 Paris International Exposition, packed his bags and set off for Argentina. Antonio Bonet’s European Baggage in Argentina: Manifesto of the Grupo Austral analyzes that well-known manifesto to reveal the intellectual and graphic sources of each point on the list. The author argues that Bonet wrote most of the manifesto himself. To support his conclusions, Tabera Roldán delves into the most personal aspects of Bonet’s biography and ideas.

Aurora Fernández and Luis de Fontcuberta bring us A House Among the Pines by Francisco Sáenz de Oiza: Working with the Environment, where the authors make use of well-known sketches to analyze Juan Huarte en Formentor’s Guest Pavilion (1968), an addition to the home designed by José María García de Paredes and Javier Carvajal some years earlier. By interpreting the sketches and comparing them to the completed building and analyzing pieces of Sáenz de Oiza’s writing, the authors are able to draw conclusions about the architect’s personality and interest in architecture in relation to its environment. They also describe the ways that users live and their encounter with daily life in these spaces.

Sung Taeg Nam presents The Effect of Everyday Objects on Internal Fittings: Loos and Le Corbusier, “Housing Professors,” which continues the research he began in “Sanitary Objects in Le Corbusier: Freedom of Distribution and Radical Exhibition in the 1920s,” published in issue 15 of this journal. Everyday, anonymous, mass-produced objects prevailed at the turn of the 19th century and raised the question of who should be responsible for furnishing domestic spaces and all the implications such furnishing entailed.

In Antonio Bonet and Josep Puig Torné: Triangular Series in Cap de Salou, Juan Fernando Ródenas analyzes the triangular patterns used by the architects to design houses, pavilions and dressing rooms from 1959 to 1962 in the Nuestra Señora de Nuria housing development in Tarragona Province. When Bonet returned to Spain, tourism was booming and led to intense development of the Mediterranean coast. This gave him the chance to share the ideas tested in projects such as Punta Ballena (Uruguay, 1945-1948) and to demonstrate that geometry and the triangle are strong design motifs that can become patterns and systems capable of working with different programs, adapting to the landscape and dealing with the complex relationship between architecture and a natural environment largely occupied by farmland at the time.

Design of a House for Cheerful Living, 1945 was jointly written by Noelia Galván Desvaux, Eduardo Carazo Lefort and Antonio Álvaro Tordesillas. It tells the story of a little-known episode in the U.S. post-war period. A contest sponsored by the architecture journal *Pencil Points* challenged entrants to design a suburban home of a specific size on a limited budget for a young American family. The article focuses on a few of the proposals submitted by the more than 900 competitors, including some of the most renowned architects of the time, such as Louis Kahn, Oscar Stonorov, Marcel Breuer and Ralph Rapson. The prize was won by husband-and-wife team Norman and Jean Bodman Fletcher. The proposals examined in the article helped shape the concept of North American domestic living in the period.

In his piece, Manuel de Prada suggests some Parallels Between Art and Nature from Klee to the Independent Group. Architects Alison and Peter Smithson and artists Eduardo Paolozzi and Nigel Henderson were members of this postwar London group and the curators of the recently re-examined exhibition *Parallel of Life and Art*, held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London in late 1953. The exhibition consisted of a selection of fragments of images taken from x-rays, microscopic photography and aerial images arranged in unconventional ways and in no established order. They hoped to uncover the analogies and relationships between art, technology and nature that can be useful in the architectural process.

Roger Miralles's article, *Coastal Landscapes and the Effects of Tourism* according to J.M. Sostres: The Legacy of Seaside Tourism, incisively describes the contributions of Catalan architect J.M. Sostres to the theory and practice of transforming the coastal landscape of the Mediterranean during the development boom of the 1950s and 60s in Spain. Miralles makes use of texts, including one unpublished piece at the end of the article, and the plans of the four-house rental apartment project in Torredembarra designed by Sostres in 1961.

Finally, this issue ends with Rubén Labiano's piece on BAL 2015, the Fourth Latin American Architecture Biennial, held in Pamplona. This article describes the now-consolidated event that took place in April in Pamplona with additional activities held subsequently in Madrid and Barcelona. The Biennial brought together young, emerging architects from across Latin America.

THE 1929 BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION'S SWEDISH PAVILION: EIGHTY YEARS OF HISTORY, 1928-2008

Gerardo García-Ventosa i López

Based on original, unpublished graphic documents, this article describes the history and architecture of the 1929 Barcelona International Exposition's Swedish Pavilion. The building's decades-long evolution began on Montjuïc Hill, the site of the Exhibition, where it was built by Swedish architect Peder Clason. Its unique watchtower showcased the architect's zeal for modernity. The tower's design broke new ground and involved the use of Swedish materials and woodworking techniques.

Shortly thereafter, Barcelona City Council's Culture Delegation issued a tender open to all mountain municipalities in Catalonia at least 500 meters above sea level with developed land available that was suitable for building the Swedish Pavilion. The aim was to establish a permanent school for 300 students in the Pavilion. The Permanent School of Berga was designed by architect Josep Goday and included the Swedish Pavilion, which was adapted to create eight classrooms, as well as additional rooms, a library and a large meeting space to be used as an auditorium, theater and lecture hall.

On February 2, 1939, in the final stages of the Spanish Civil War, General Francisco Franco's troops occupied the city of Berga and the Permanent Educational Community. The facility was converted into a military hospital, then used as a barracks for the Fourth Catalan Mountain Hunters' Battalion and remained occupied for the next fifty years.

In the late 1980s, the Berga military barracks lost its strategic value as a garrison and the Spanish Ministry of Defense decided to dismantle its facilities there. The Berga Town Council seized the opportunity to strike up negotiations with the Defense Ministry in Madrid in the hopes of recovering for city use the land in the Pla del Alemany area and all its facilities. Negotiations on the agreement to transfer the property from the Ministry to the Berga City Council started in the last quarter of 1993 and the agreement was signed in the first quarter of 1994.

Once the agreement was signed, the Berga City Council decided to completely overhaul the area and furnish it with the administrative, social, cultural and educational facilities the city needed, in addition to a residential zone in the section of the property adjacent to the city.

It was against this backdrop, a year before the agreement was signed, that a young, recently graduated, Berga-born building engineer, Josep Camps i Boixadera, submitted his Final Year Project for the university to the city council, which consisted of plans to rebuild the old Swedish Pavilion and transform it into the auditorium of a small regional university.

José Camps alone should therefore be credited with the idea of rebuilding the Pavilion.

As a result of this and other favorable circumstances, the city council took the initiative to recover and rebuild the Pavilion designed by Peder Clason for the 1929

International Exhibition in Barcelona. The Pavilion was to remain on the Pla del Alemany premises in Berga, but would once again be given a new purpose: it would be fitted with lecture rooms and exhibition spaces. This meant that although the building's external dimensions and features would remain the same, the new interior would not be an exact copy of Clason's original designs.

MIES THE DANDY

Mariano González Presencio

By considering Mies van der Rohe's character and his work through the lens of the contributions of dandyism to modernity, this article offers a different perspective on where the German architect stands in terms of some of the recurring questions in the conversation on cutting-edge design, especially those on the relationship between architecture and the city.

Dandyism started in England during the Regency period and was embodied in the slender figure of the young George Bryan "Beau" Brummell. For many, this idle, sophisticated, ascetic youth – who was also melancholic and cynical – represents the true dandy, whereas later generations, who brought intellectual finesse to dandyism, was merely an adulteration. However, it was precisely with the appearance of figures such as Barbey d'Aurevilly, Oscar Wilde and Charles Baudelaire, who epitomized this ideal of dandyism, that the myth of the dandy took shape as an intellectual option.

Of particular interest is the comparison between the dandy's manners and their meaning and the forms of Miesian architecture. In order to pursue this line of thought, let's look at two key concepts in dandyism: "the system" and "strict rules." For the dandy, rules guarantee freedom. By a similar token, voluntary submission to geometry and repetition does not hinder Mies's creativity. It is his awareness of the limits that makes his work sublime.

Mies has been criticized for creating a Platonic universe, a ceaseless, featureless space where life can scarcely be expected to exist. Dandies also attempt to impose their spiritual superiority on the urban masses by following a set of strict rules, as manifested by precise repetition of the same daily rituals, discretion and refined attire.

In America, Mies's most important urban proposal was the design for the new Illinois Institute of Technology campus. His plan was criticized for its apparent lack of communication with the rest of the city. One criticism of the poetics of Mies's work is that he avoids reflecting on the context. Instead, he proposes an independent, universally applicable design system apparently unconcerned with the complexity and discontinuity of the contemporary city.

However, Miesian reduction can also be seen as a specific response to big cities in terms of order, clarity and efficiency, a systematic repetition that provides security against organic complexity. It is an aristocratic pose that Mies adopts by relentlessly insisting on the same unvarying formula, not out of a sense of superiority or as a stylistic choice, but because of the certainty of the solution.

His architectural objects, silent and unyielding, ever beautiful and elegant, can be identified with the figure of the stylish flâneur, who plays the roles of spectator and attraction with respect to the crowds that roam the city. This distinction sets these architectural objects apart from all other constructed masses, just as the dandy's distinction sets him apart from the crowd. It is based on contention, a formal sobriety that rests on the accuracy of the volumes and the precision of the sections modulating the facades. Dandies achieve it through sober attire and elegant composure.

THE EUROPEAN BACKGROUND OF ANTONIO BONET FOR ARGENTINA: "EL MANIFIESTO AUSTRAL"

Andrés Tabera Roldán

When in April 1938 Antonio Bonet Castellana (Barcelona, 1913-1989) landed with his scarce luggage at the port of Buenos Aires, it could hardly have been imagined the successful performance of its expectations, or at least, initially. Just a year after his arrival, in June 1939, he will sign along with the Buenos Aires architects Juan Kurchan and Jorge Ferrari Hardoy "El manifiesto del Grupo Austral: Voluntad y Acción". The Austral Manifest is a theoretical eight-page document in which it could be found the apparently cohesive statutes of an enthusiastic association of young Buenos Aires architects, whose mission was to lead in a modern key, or rather corbuserian, CIAM actions for Argentina. Although this is the main theory that has been sustained until today, from the detailed review of their content -mainly graphic- it can be defended that the real author of the Austral Manifesto was Bonet.

Intentionally leaving aside the written part and knowing that the only draft or the Manifesto is a handwritten one developed by the Catalan architect, it would be advisable to stop and examine the series of photographs which are with the text. Perhaps because of their small size, perhaps because immersing in them would mean finding more questions than answers, or perhaps because some of them are easily identifiable while others harbor many doubts, the truth is that they haven't been paid enough attention up to now. However, to understand the uniqueness of the Austral proposal we should be doing the opposite process proposed by Bonet: identifying each of these pieces of architecture and history, considering the importance and meaning in their time and wonder why they are of such relevance, besides of clarifying through which mass media they got the pictures from. That is, the graphic detailed deconstruction of the Manifesto.

Furthermore, its two main pages will be analyzed to inquire not only in issues which belong to the architect's own biography but also to review implied features in this specific genre of the interwar avant-garde.

ENTRE- PINOS HOUSE BY FRANCISCO SÁENZ DE OÍZA: WORKING WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

Aurora Fernández, Luis de Fontcuberta

The study of the invited pavilion to the house of Juan Huarte in Formentor by the architect Francisco Sáenz de Oíza in 1968, through his drawings during your stay in Mallorca, discovers a way of addressing the addition of buildings.

The project is approached from the analysis of the environment, including the two existing pavilions, designed by Carvajal y García de Paredes architects, to work with parties and the idea of addition and juxtaposition to solve the all. The proposal to work with parts (fragments) allows him to make an inventory of stocks and naming them to take value improving the final solution. This architectural project is not more than the interlocking of all these parts on a "board" that is own, the topography and environment as Sáenz de Oíza demonstrates us enriching existences and qualifying them.

Analyzing this pavilion gives us insight into the personality of Sáenz de Oíza and his approach to the architectural project, its development, and the role that architecture takes in relation to its surroundings and aspirations of the user.

THE EFFECT OF EVERYDAY OBJECTS ON INDOOR REMODELING: LOOS AND LE CORBUSIER, "HOUSING PROFESSORS"

Sung Taeg Nam

In the early 20th century, a new phenomenon arrived in domestic architecture: the need for interior design with ready-made objects that were often heterogeneous. This revolution weakened the ideas of Gesamtkunstwerk (the Work of Total Art) and architects as Formmeister (Form Master). Yet some architects such as Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier realized and accepted the change of the paradigm. According to Loos' claims, residents had to organize the interior space by themselves. Instead, Loos assumed architects started to have a new role, which was Wohnungslehrer (Housing Teacher). In this context of architect's new task, Le Corbusier also tried to lead people to make the choice of functional objects and the modern "art of inhabitation" by using the publication of writings as well as architectural work.

ANTONIO BONET AND JOSEP PUIG TORNÉ. TRIANGULAR PATTERNS IN CAP DE SALOU

Juan Fernando Ródenas García

Antonio Bonet and Josep Puig Torné tested several possibilities of implementation of tourist residential buildings in Cap Salou (Tarragona) using triangular patterns such as Rubio house (1959), Van der Veecken house (1961) and 'Cala Grancs' snack bar and changing rooms (1961-1962). Those patterns were part of a higher order structure such as Nuestra Señora de Núria urbanization, designed by Bonet from Argentina in 1959 which derived from Punta Ballena urbanization, Maldonado, Uruguay (1945-1948).

This document is going to show, through the analysis of Bonet and Puig's work, that the use of geometry in their projects is not dealt with as a stylistic issue but used as a tool to fit the 'site forces' for the benefit of the projects, whether for aspect,

dominant views, wind protection, or harnessing of the landforms of Cape Salou: ridges, depressions, mounds, inlets, amphitheaters, points and coves. In Salou, the archetypal vernacular architectural elements used by Bonet were formalized with triangular patterns: pavilions, platforms and patios.

In that sense, Bonet's attitude in facing his projects can be understood as a research work because he tried not only to solve the particular problems of the commission, but also to achieve his research to go further. He sought a universal solution through the definition of patterns as elements to be improved, perfected, systematized, and as far as possible prefabricated. Patterns were able to mutate and sometimes be transgressed due to several reasons, whether for adapting to a construction system or topographical, climatic or programmatic adaptation. Bonet was an architect who had a clear investigative vocation. This fact was shown in each project when he didn't use to repeat same constructive solutions but he tried to improve them next time.

Researching carries risks but allows hypothesizing and contrasting results. Similarly, Puig Torné was still working in the same way even after the time in which he worked in collaboration with Bonet.

'DESIGN OF A HOUSE FOR A CHEERFUL LIVING' 1945

Noelia Galván Desvaux, Eduardo Garazo Lefort, Antonio Álvaro Tordesillas

The development of the American modern house had much to do with the numerous competitions held in the United States during the 1940s. The residential projects funded by the state were no longer built from 1943, and then the architecture tried to look ahead bringing up the design of the new post-war home. Many publications and manufacturers proposed imaginative architectural competitions, aiming to shape the ideal suburban house and the new lifestyle of the average American after the conflict.

The competition "Design of a House for Cheerful Living" from 1945, sponsored by Pencil Points magazine and the two glass companies Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. and Pittsburgh Corning Corp., is part of this series of post-war contests. However, the reason why this competition is especially interesting as a subject of study is its synchronism with the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the euphoria and change in the American society.

More than 900 proposals, many of them from renowned architects, were submitted to the competition. They provided the basis for the further development of the house, laying the foundations of prefabrication, integrated furniture and energy efficiency, issues surprisingly close to our contemporary concerns. In this way, besides showing the housing projects, the formal evolution suffered in the domestic post-war architecture will also be examined through the projects submitted by Louis Kahn, Marcel Breuer, Ralph Rapson, Philip Johnson and Norman Fletcher.

As it will be discussed, all this contributed to a deeper social change, where architects played a key role since their perspective on domestic architecture in the different competitions turned into the image of the perfect family inhabiting in a suburban residential area.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ART AND NATURE. FROM KLEE TO INDEPENDENT GROUP

Manuel de Prada, José Ramón Domingo Magaña

Structural similarities between natural and artistic forms could be easily justified: art, as it was defined in ancient times, is "imitation of nature". Not an imitation of what today we think is nature: forests, mountains, rivers, animals, etc, but imitation of the essential or ideal nature of things. After the microscope revealed the existence of structures different from the immediately visible forms, but as real as them, the arts could imitate them. Nevertheless, some artists thought that there might not be causal similarities, but significant, between natural and artificial (or artistic) forms. This possibility led to Eduardo Paolozzi, Nigel Henderson and architects Alison and Peter Smithson to assemble the Parallel of Life and Art photo-exhibition. His intention was to discover, from analogies and parallels between different images, a "new landscape" where art meet again nature and technology. They wished expand the human field of vision beyond the limits imposed by previous generations.

Common laws existence in nature and art shows that human being creations are also nature recreations. Surrealism and structuralism confirmed it. Apart from possible influences, parallels between Klee paintings and schemes made by the Smithsons are equally significant.

THE COASTAL LANDSCAPE AND THE EFFECTS OF TOURISM ACCORD Roger Miralles

The article is focussed on the relationship of Sostres with the touristic architecture developed at the littoral. This analysis is made with three works of Sostres: a building –four apartments at Torredembarra- and two writings –“landscape and design” and another reproduced at the end of this article that was remained not published until today.

Sostres had not the possibility of building a lot and most of his buildings he builds are dedicated to the architecture of the free time –secondary residences, rental apartments, and a hotel. That is why is relevant his production as a critic on the use of the territory for this architecture of the free time. Sostres seems to understand that this abuse of the territory is because of this new type of buildings and he made a new statement in the one that building is not the devil because landscape needs this building. The writings of Sostres state that when one has to build in this surrounding has to have some continuity with the Mediterranean tradition. In the apartments at Torredembarra we can see this tradition in the use and transformation of the type of building -botiques- with the use of the ground floor and the kind of plotting he uses. But to understand the Mediterranean tradition is not a just a reinterpretation of what he has on the surroundings, Sostres understand the landscape as a cultural tradition. That is why his buildings, I understand, are a lecture of the Greek architecture that is the architecture of the Mediterranean in Sostres mind. He was professor of History of Architecture at the Barcelona school and one of the main books he recommend was *The Idea of Space in Greek Architecture* of Martienssen. This article uses this text as a touchstone in relation to the four apartments at Torredembarra.

In Sostres mind, the transformation of the landscape seems to be unstoppable. This transformation should have the same principles that have buildings that build the building until then.

the lectures and roundtable discussions by Carlos Sambricio, Andrea Griborio, Alberto Campo Baeza and Miquel Adrià.

The Latin American Architecture Biennial is an initiative of the AS20 research group at the University of Navarra's School of Architecture. It is sponsored by the University of Navarra, the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the Pamplona City Council, the Association of Towns in Pamplona County and the Navarre branch of the Basque-Navarrese Institute of Architects Association.

FOURTH LATIN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE BIENNIAL, BAL 2015, IN PAMPLONA

Rubén Labiano

Last April, while international focus on modern Latin American architecture of the past was firmly placed on the ambitious exhibition held by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, the Fourth Latin American Architecture Biennial, BAL 2015, was held in Pamplona. In its fourth year, the Biennial has gained momentum as a meeting point for celebrating the fresh, new architecture of Latin America. Twelve teams from seven countries (Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) were chosen to participate in this edition. Teams from two prior participating countries (Uruguay and Paraguay) also attended. A total of 30 teams from nine countries had the opportunity to present and describe their projects. For a few days, Pamplona was a celebration of the best of today's emerging Latin American architecture and provided a glimpse of what its immediate future might look like. The Biennial lasted three days and included lectures, roundtable discussions, exhibitions and cultural visits. For the first time, the program included additional activities in Madrid and Barcelona.

In 2009, the Latin American Architecture Biennial (BAL) was created to present, in Spain, recent, noteworthy examples of the professional output of young Latin American architects (not yet 40). As a space in which bonds can be tightened and distances shortened, the Biennial is a strong, sound counterpoint to similar events in the English-speaking world. It is held in odd-numbered years so as not to coincide with the Spanish government's Spanish-American Biennial Fair of Architecture and Town Planning (BIAU). With the growing support of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the BAL is being integrated more fully into the BIAU's formal structure so that the critical focus can be placed on each level of intervention making up the complete Spanish-American panorama at the BIAU. This makes it possible to explore the experiences of several recent teams from all over Latin America who have managed to develop their own architectural discourse and have taken on the task of turning the dream of building a continent into a reality. This global strategy of the BAL aims to build bridges between Latin America and Spain and to consolidate the event as the biennial of young Latin American architecture.

This year, with Mexico as the invited guest, a traveling monographic exhibition curated by Miquel Adrià was held on Mexican architecture with the support of the Mexican Embassy and the Cultural Institute of Mexico in Spain. It will on display in Madrid in June before traveling to Latin America. Mexico was also the main topic of

